

Self-Directed Transportation

(OAC 5123-9-26)

Effective 7/1/2022

The Big Picture

- Transportation is commonly cited as the primary barrier for community employment, integration and community-based supports.
- “Transportation #1 unmet need of people with disabilities across Ohio.”
- “Top unmet needs include transportation to work and to get to medical appointments.”
- “64 % of Ohioans with disabilities state they have no access to vehicles when needed.”

-DD Council Transportation Study 7/2017

How Did We Get Here?

- Several policies and advocacy from people with disabilities drove the need for community-based, integrated services and supports.
- In 2020, waiver services were redesigned to better fund community transportation and modified vehicles were added.
- Throughout redesign, advocates continued to promote the need for greater flexibility and more options, including Uber, Lyft, and other commercial providers not currently available through Medicaid waiver funding.
- The pandemic impacted business for many Non-Medical Transportation (NMT) providers across the state.

Continuing HCBS Transportation Services

Non-Medical Transportation (NMT) - Service that provides transportation to and from community employment and day service settings including day habilitation centers and sheltered workshops. 2020 redesign added funding for community-based transportation and modified vehicles as well coverage for transportation to volunteer, internship, and post secondary education locations.

Commercial NMT - Providers of publicly available transportation, also certified through DODD, who bill at their Usual and Customary Rate (UCR).

Transportation - Service typically associated with Homemaker/Personal Care services. Sometimes provided "on behalf of" an individual.

Who Can Benefit from Self- Directed Transportation?

- People working in the community, especially when working late night or weekend shifts.
- People looking to be more involved in community activities, especially when those activities are in the evening, on weekends, or at times when transportation has typically not been as available.
- People looking for more community-based, or typically available, transportation providers.
- People wanting to navigate the community independently, without receiving another waiver service at the same time.
- People wanting to access transportation options that have been previously unavailable.

The New Rule

OAC 5123-9-26

"Self-Directed Transportation" means a service that enables an individual to access activities and opportunities available in the broader community such as competitive integrated workplaces, integrated community participation and contribution, community resources, and businesses consistent with the individual service plan. Self-Directed Transportation enhances independence as it is available around the clock, including weekends and holidays, to accommodate an individual's scheduled and spontaneous transportation needs.

Features & Use of Self- Directed Transportation



The Options

Self-Directed Transportation includes:

- Purchase of prepaid vouchers, cards, passes, or tokens to access modes of ground transportation available to the general public such as modes available from regional transit authorities and ride-hailing services (e.g., taxicab, "Lyft," or "Uber") at the usual and customary rate or fare; and
- Per mile or per trip reimbursement made to a person who meets the provider qualifications in paragraph (C) of this rule and who has a written agreement for provision of Self-Directed Transportation with the individual being transported.

An individual's Self-Directed Transportation budget for a waiver eligibility span is determined based on the individual's needs and consideration of the individual's preferences and available funds.

Examples:
*Purchased through
vouchers, passes or
reimbursement
through a Financial
Management
Services (FMS)
entity*

Uber, Lyft,
other ride share
services & taxis

Public or
regional
transportation

Family, friends,
neighbors, or
co-workers with
written
agreement

Certified DD
providers

Limitations on Families as providers

The following limits apply to families as providers:

- Parents/guardians may not provide services to their minor children.
- Guardians of adults may only be a provider if approved by the probate court.

Who Can Provide This Service?

Self-Directed Transportation shall be provided by:

- a. A vendor of ground transportation available to the general public; or
- b. Someone chosen by the person. The chosen provider will receive per mile or per trip reimbursement in accordance with a written agreement for provision of Self-Directed Transportation with the individual being transported. This provider must bill for services through the FMS entity and will be paid by the FMS entity
- c. An agency provider or independent provider certified by DODD to provide Non-Medical Transportation or Transportation that agrees to provide Self-Directed Transportation in accordance with the rule.

Financial Management Services (FMS)

Financial Management Services entity

Many administrative aspects of the Self-Directed Transportation service will be handled through a Financial Management Services (FMS) entity.

Agreement

Non-Certified providers of Self-Directed Transportation will have to review and sign a Medicaid agreement with the FMS before providing the service, also an agreement with the person receiving services.

Payment: UCR

The FMS will cover the cost of cards, passes and vouchers to pay for Self-Directed Transportation at the Usual Customary Rate (UCR).

Payment: Per Trip/Per Mile

Per trip

The FMS will reimburse providers of the service at the rate negotiated between the person and their provider, not to exceed \$12/trip.

Per mile

The FMS will reimburse providers of the service at the established per mile rate.

People (family, friends, neighbors, co-workers) who want to become providers of Self-Directed Transportation (SDT) must:

- Apply through the FMS entity.
- Not have six or more points on their driving record.
- Hold a valid Ohio driver's license.
- Hold valid liability insurance as specified by Ohio law.
- Complete a background investigation in accordance with rule 5123-2-02 of the Ohio Administrative Code and not have any "disqualifying offenses" as defined in paragraph (B)(8) of that rule.

Independent Self-Directed Transportation Providers

Current Providers

- Certified providers of transportation services Non-Medical Transportation (NMT) and Transportation can provide Self-Directed Transportation.
- To do so, they will need to apply via the FMS.
- Certified providers will be processed quickly through the FMS.
- Those certified as providers of Commercial NMT will be able to bill their Usual Customary Rate (UCR).
- Non-commercial certified providers will only be able to bill the established per mile rate or a negotiated per trip rate up to the \$12/trip cap.

Payment Methods

- There are 3 ways Self-Directed Transportation services can be paid/reimbursed:
 - 1) Usual and Customary Rate (Only for commercial providers available to the general public)
 - 2) Per mile
 - 3) Per trip

Usual Customary Rate (UCR)

- Uber or Lyft
- Other ride share services
- Taxi
- Public transportation
- Rate is provider's UCR or standard fare

Per Mile

- Certified DD providers
- Other providers under agreement with the FMS entity
- Rates are set by rule

Per Trip

- Certified DD providers
- Other providers under agreement with the FMS entity
- Negotiate rate up to cap

Rate Examples

Jessi Russell lives in Delaware County and receives transportation through her waiver.

Here is what she says about Self-Directed Transportation:

"Yes, I only use Uber. I use Uber 5 or 6 times a week. It's about 56-63 miles a week. Right now, I use PDGS in the SELF waiver to pay for transportation. I will change to the new service "Self-Directed Transportation" when it is effective. I use the Uber app. My annual budget is about \$12,000 each year. Uber takes me to work, home, to get my medicine and get my nails finished. I have been doing this for close to 4 years.

My parents used to drive me. This is better because it gives freedom. The last time I had a doctor's appointment, the DATA bus left me. I had to use Uber."

Jessi's Story!

Christine Brown lives in Franklin County and receives transportation through her waiver.

Here is what she says about Self-Directed Transportation:

"Right now, I use PDGS in the SELF waiver to pay for transportation. I will change to the new service "Self-Directed Transportation" when it is effective. My annual budget is \$13,000 each year. In my ISP I have \$10,000 for yellow cab and \$3,000 to buy Uber gift cards. The \$3,000 is divided into \$1,500 for the first part of the year and another \$1,500 for the rest. I use it to take me to the doctor, go to meetings, like DD Council and to visit my friends. I work at the OSU Nisonger Center and usually take the yellow cab. I started this in 2012. Before I had to mostly rely on staff, my parents or COTA Mainstream. COTA had to be scheduled at least 24 hours ahead and came really early. I would get to work before the place opened and had to wait outside. It was terrible in the winter. With this service I feel more independent and can get where I want when I want. I don't have to rely on others"

Christine's Story!

Additional Supports



Resources:

Self-Directed Transportation Handout
SELF Waiver Changes Handout
SELF Waiver Handbook



To find the newly amended rule click on the link:
[OAC 5123-9-26](#)



Questions about changes can be submitted
to: waiverpolicyta@dodd.ohio.gov